

**In the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. **(Canceled)**
2. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 21, wherein the sleeve has a plurality of openings formed therein.
3. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 2, wherein said plurality of openings extend across the active surface.
4. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 21, wherein each of the at least one depression extends in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.
5. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 21, wherein the at least one depression is a plurality of depressions arranged at regular intervals around the sleeve.
6. **(Currently Amended)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 21, wherein at an end of the sleeve opposite the inlet portion:  
the ~~internal~~ cross-sectional area of the sleeve is at least about 5% smaller than an area of a circle having an equally long perimeter, and the circle has a diameter that is larger than a width of the sleeve.
7. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 2, wherein the sleeve has an opening formed in an end of the sleeve opposite the inlet portion, the catalytic converter device further comprising a cover plate covering the opening.
8. **(Canceled)**

9. **(Currently Amended)** The exhaust system according to claim 22, further comprising a muffler, the preliminary catalytic converter device being arranged at least partially within the muffler.
10. **(Previously Presented)** The exhaust system according to claim 22, wherein the sleeve has a plurality of openings formed therein.
11. **(Previously Presented)** The exhaust system device according to claim 10, wherein said plurality of openings extend across the active surface.
12. **(Canceled)**
13. **(Previously Presented)** The exhaust system according to claim 22, wherein each of the at least one depression extends in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.
14. **(Previously Presented)** The exhaust system according to claim 22, wherein the at least one depression is a plurality of depressions arranged at regular intervals around the sleeve.
15. **(Previously Presented)** The exhaust system according to claim 22, wherein the sleeve has an opening formed in an end of the sleeve opposite the inlet portion, the catalytic converter device further comprising a cover plate covering the opening.
16. **(Previously Presented)** The catalytic converter device according to claim 22, wherein at an end of the sleeve opposite the inlet portion:  
the ~~internal~~ cross-sectional area of the sleeve is at least about 5% smaller than an area of a circle having an equally long perimeter, and the circle has a diameter that is larger than a width of the sleeve.
- 17.-20. **(Canceled)**

21. **(Currently Amended)** A catalytic converter device for cleansing exhaust gas emitted from an internal combustion engine, the catalytic converter device comprising:

- an elongated body having a longitudinal axis;
- an inlet portion located at one end of the elongated body for receiving the exhaust gas;
- a sleeve extending generally away from the inlet portion generally along the longitudinal axis;
- at least one depression formed in the sleeve, the depression having a depth, the depth of the depression increasing with increasing distance from the inlet portion; and
- a catalytic material disposed on the sleeve to form an active surface for reacting with the exhaust gas,
- a perimeter defined by the active surface in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the perimeter increasing with increasing distance from the inlet portion, and
- a cross-sectional area defined by the active surface in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the cross-sectional area decreasing with increasing distance from the inlet portion.

22. **(Currently Amended)** An exhaust system for an internal combustion engine, comprising:

- an exhaust inlet defining an upstream end of the exhaust system;
  - an exhaust outlet defining a downstream end of the exhaust system;
  - the exhaust inlet and the exhaust outlet defining a flow path therebetween;
  - a primary catalytic converter device disposed along the flow path; and
  - a preliminary catalytic converter device disposed along the flow path in an upstream direction from the primary catalytic converter device,
- the preliminary catalytic converter device comprising:
- an elongated body having a longitudinal axis;
  - an inlet ~~area portion~~ located at one end of the elongated body for receiving the exhaust gas;
  - a sleeve extending generally away from the inlet area generally along the longitudinal axis;
  - at least one depression formed in the sleeve, the depression having a depth, the depth of the depression increasing with increasing distance from the inlet area; and

a catalytic material disposed on the sleeve to form an active surface for reacting with the exhaust gas,

~~the surface area of the active surface increasing with increasing distance from the inlet~~  
~~area~~ a perimeter defined by the active surface in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the perimeter increasing with increasing distance from the inlet area, and

the cross-sectional area of the active surface in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis decreasing with increasing distance from the inlet area.